



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
TEACHERS OF MATHEMATICS

April 2, 2008

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations Subcommittee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Harkin:

On behalf of the 100,000 members of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), I am writing to you to request that you and your colleagues include an investment of \$95 million in "Math Now" in the FY 2009 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education appropriations bill.

As recently detailed in the National Mathematics Advisory Panel's final report, preparing elementary and middle school students for success in algebra is crucial to fostering future academic and personal achievement. Last year, as part of the America COMPETES Act, Math Now, a new initiative for elementary and middle school students to prepare students for rigorous high school mathematics courses was authorized. The program would receive \$95 million under President Bush's FY 2009 budget request. The overwhelming bipartisan support the America COMPETES Act won in the House and Senate last year warrants a commensurate investment and support for this proposal.

The National Math Panel calls for a well-defined set of the most critical topics in the early grades. While NCTM advocates for a broad vision of the mathematics for all students at these levels, it also recognizes the necessity for focus and coherence within a prekindergarten through grade 8 mathematics program. An investment in Math Now would be critical as math educators strive to teach a coherent set of mathematics topics that are important for all students to acquire at particular grade levels in order to prepare for the study of algebra as well as other important mathematics.

A strong K-12 math and science education for all students is increasingly important to our nation's economic stability, future national security, and future workforce, and this modest, but crucial investment would yield significant benefits. As the appropriations process moves forward, if we can provide you with any additional information, please contact NCTM Associate Executive Director for Communications Ken Krehbiel at (703) 620-9840, ext. 2102 or Ellin Nolan at (202) 289-3900.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James M. Rubillo".

James M. Rubillo
Executive Director